

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: JAPAN-SOVIET FISHERY NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TOKYO 2861

1. SUMMARY: IN EFFORT TO BREAK STALEMATE IN JAPAN-SOVIET FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS, NOW ENTERING 20TH DAY, TWO SIDES HAVE AGREED TO DIVIDE INTO WORKING GROUPS TO DEAL WITH SEPARATE ISSUES. IN MEANTIME, ON 1 MARCH, JAPAN SEA SALMON FISHERMEN COMMENCED OPERATIONS. SIMILAR SITUATIONS HAVE OCCURRED IN PREVIOUS YEARS WITH JAPAN SALMON FISHERMEN BEGINNING TO FISH BEFORE SALMON NEGOTIATIONS COMPLETED; AND AS IN PAST YEARS SOVIETS HAVE DEMANDED THAT JAPAN CEASE ALL SALMON FISHING UNTIL SETTLEMENT REACHED. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF APPARENTLY FRUITLESS NEGOTIATIONS, JAPANESE ACCEPTED SOVIET PLAN TO BREAK INTO THREE WORKING GROUPS TO FACILITATE PROGRESS ON SEPARATE ASPECTS OF NEGOTIATIONS, NAMELY:
A) DRAFTING OF FISHERY AGREEMENT B) DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL

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FISHERIES COOPERATION C) DISCUSSION OF CONDITION OF SALMON STOCKS AND JAPANESE QUOTA FOR SALMON. MOST TALK SO FAR SEEMS TO HAVE CENTERED ON STATE OF HIGH SEAS SALMON STOCKS. SOVIETS MAINTAIN THEY ARE OVERFISHED WHEREAS JAPAN INSISTS THEY ARE IN GOOD SHAPE.

3. ON MARCH 1, 127 JAPANESE GILLNETTERS, LICENSED BY JAPAN FISHERY

AGENCY, COMMENCED FISHING FOR SALMON IN JAPAN SEA. ON MARCH 15, 261 SALMON LONGLINERS WILL ALSO COMMENCE FISHING IN THAT AREA. BECAUSE MOST OF SALMON IN JAPAN SEA ARE OF ASIATIC ORIGIN, SOVIETS HAVE DEMANDED THAT JAPAN CEASE FISHING OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY AND REFRAIN FROM ISSUING ANY ADDITIONAL LICENSES. JAPAN HAS RESPONDED THAT OPERATIONS MUST START NOW BEFORE SALMON MOVE TO NORTH OUT OF RANGE OF SMALL SALMON FISHING VESSELS AND THAT OPERATIONS WILL STOP IN TIME TO KEEP JAPAN CATCH WITHIN QUOTA THAT IS EXPECTED FROM SOVIETS. JAPANESE HAVE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT JAPAN-SOVIET COMMISSION ON FISHERIES OF NW PACIFIC STILL IN EXISTENCE EVEN THOUGH SOVIETS GAVE NOTICE OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW APRIL 29 LAST YEAR.

4. COMMENT: THOUGH FISHING NOW BY JAPANESE WOULD SEEM LIKELY TO HEIGHTEN FRICTION IN NEGOTIATIONS, SIMILAR SITUATION HAS OCCURRED DURING PREVIOUS JAPAN-SOVIET COMMISSION MEETINGS, WHICH HAVE USUALLY TAKEN PLACE IN MARCH AND APRIL AFTER JAPAN SEA SALMON FISHING HAS STARTED. (IN OVERALL SALMON QUOTA OF 62,000 TONS PROVIDED LAST YEAR BY THE SOVIETS, 3,600 TONS WERE ALLOTTED BY JAPAN FISHERY AGENCY TO JAPAN SEA GILLNETTERS AND LONGLINERS.) WHILE WORKING GROUPS ARE UNLIKELY TO LEAD TO QUICK BREAKTHROUGH, THEIR FORMATION WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE SERIOUS INTENT ON PART OF SOVIETS.
MANSFIELD

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